REMARKS

The Examiner's attention to the present application is noted with appreciation.

The Examiner rejected claims 17-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter. The preamble of claim 17 has been amended as kindly suggested by the Examiner.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 7-9, 15-17, and 23-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maarek et al. ("Maarek"). The rejection is traversed.

With the present invention a user takes an index of world wide web pages and customizes it by changing the hierarchy, renaming topics, excluding topics, etc. The user can then display this index on their web page. The user can also conduct a customized search of the Internet or an Intranet by searching all or part of their customized index.

In contrast, Maarek discloses a way of searching the Internet and providing the search results as a hierarchy, or site map. Maarek's approach is integrating full text search techniques with site mapping techniques to display the results. Maarek states that: "WebCutter is a dynamic site mapping tool, in the sense that the browse structure is automatically generated by a crawler that starts off from a set of initial "seed" URL's and constructs the map dynamically." p. 1270, § 2, lines 8-12. Maarek can be viewed as including a "customizable index of HTML pages" but the customization is done through a search. "The crawler takes an input user-specified parameter (e.g. from which URL to start, when to stop, how to tailor, etc.) ... and goes crawling and searching the Web. When the crawler completes, it sends the graph to the WebCutter" which displays the search results. Maarek p. 1275, § 3, lines 4-7.

The Examiner has confused Maarek with the present invention because Maarek states that it includes an index of web pages and that the index is customizable. Yet, Maarek in fact teaches away from the present invention.

The Examiner states that "Maarek teaches providing an index server maintaining an index to hypertext transmission pages ...", citing p. 1270, § 2, lines 1-5. However, Maarek does not disclose an

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"index server" at all. The cited passage states that: "WebCutter is both a mapping and visualization tool, enabling users to create, maintain and view 'Web maps', i.e., an organization of a set of nodes (URLs) and their interconnections (hyperlink references)." Maarek further states that the user can create and maintain "web maps." Maarek provides the creation of these "web maps" as the result of a search of the web. When someone uses Maarek to search, the results, which in today's vocabulary are called the Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs), are made into "web maps." In other words, Maarek graphically depicts the SERPs.

Maarek does not provide "an index server maintaining an index" to HTML pages. The present invention, however, maintains an index that has been customized by the user. The index server provides (serves) the user's index to the user on demand.

The Examiner further states that Maarek teaches "permitting a user to specify any subset of the plurality of topic categories", citing p. 1271, § 2.1 and p. 1273, § 2.3, lines 1-4. Maarek, however, simply takes user input on what to search and then gives the results as a site map. The user specifies the "subset" by changing the search. This subset is not of a plurality of topic categories. "WebCutter 'shapes' the map so as to explore more thoroughly in directions where relevant information is found. This is done by employing the 'fish search' paradigm." P. 1271, § 2.1 col. 1 lines 5-8. Maarek "ranks" each search result and then visually depicts the results, with the most relevant results as the most visually prevalent. In other words, the search results are displayed graphically. After the user gets the result of the search, they can then "dig deeper." "Each of the views can be further customized manually by the user, by allowing him/her to change the position of the nodes in the graph." P. 1272, § 2.3 col. 2 lines 5-7. In other words, the user can change the "view" of the web map to show some of the less relevant search results. Maarek notes that a "prominent feature of WebCutter is the ability of selecting submaps based on graph topology, relevance to topic, object type, etc." What Maarek is saying is that one can transverse the result (just as one might traverse any web index) or one can get a subset of the search by searching again

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(just as search for "Ferraris" might give one a subset of a search for "sports cars").

This is distinct from the present invention as disclosed and claimed. The selecting of submaps that Maarek discloses is done by a web crawler crawling the Internet to produce a site map of more specific search results. The present invention discloses and claims "permitting a user to specify any subset of the plurality of topic categories", namely, that the user can take the initial index given and delete topics. The present invention does not crawl the web to get the index. For the present invention a main (or starting) index exists that is then customized by the user.

Furthermore, Maarek's "web map" will change as their search algorithm changes, while the server index of the present invention is completely independent of the search algorithm used.

The Examiner further states that "Maarek teaches adding to a hypertext transmission protocol page controlled by the user link information permitting execution of searches of the index in any category of the subset but only categories in the subset", citing p. 1270, § 1, col. 1, line 8 – col. 2 line 18. Maarek is very clear that its approach is integrating full text search techniques with site mapping techniques to display the results. It does not allow for a search of only a subset of an index. In fact, Maarek does not search any index at all. Maarek does a full text search of the Internet/Intranet and then displays the results as a graphical scene.

The present invention, by contrast, allows users to fully customize a web index and then allows the user to only search the web sites that are contained in their customized index, or a portion thereof.

Regarding claims 7, 15, and 23, the Examiner states that "Maarek teaches permitting the user within a branch of a hierarchy of categories to either include or exclude subcategories in the branch or both", citing p. 1273, § 2.3, lines 1-4. Maarek merely allows a search of the Internet and it is only dynamic in that a browse structure is generated from a search. "WebCutter is a dynamic site mapping tool, in the sense that the browse structure is automatically generated by a crawler that starts off from a set of initial 'seed' URL's and constructs the map dynamically." P. 1270, § 2, lines 8-12. No customization of topic

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categories is available – a new search has to be performed or the "seed" URL's changed.

The Examiner rejected claims 2-6, 10-14, and 18-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maarek et al. ("Maarek") in view of Martinez et al. ("Martinez"). The rejection is traversed. Martinez does not cure the deficiencies of Maarek noted above.
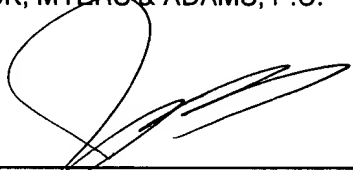
The Examiner states that "Martinez teaches customizable directories", citing Fig. 4-5, and col. 1 line 6 – col. 5 line 18. Martinez does not teach customizable directories. Martinez discloses a "method for re-anchoring branches within a directory tree". Martinez customizes Windows Explorer so that the user can only look at a subset of the files. Martinez makes much of the fact that there are too many files on a computer, that no one wants to see them all, and that if you expand Windows Explorer, all the files you really want are on the right side of the explorer window, instead of close to the left. Therefore, Martinez allows one to take any subdirectory and by selecting "start tree here," the subdirectory is re-anchored to the left and none its of the parents are viewed. In this way Martinez customizes how one views the directory tree, but not characteristics of the directories themselves.

An earnest attempt has been made to respond to each and every ground of rejection advanced by the Examiner. However, should the Examiner have any queries, suggestions or comments relating to a speedy disposition of the application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

PEACOCK, MYERS & ADAMS, P.C.

By:_____

Jeffrey D. Myers
Reg. No. 35,964
Direct Dial: (505) 998-1502

Attorney for Applicant
P.O. Box 26927
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-6927
Phone: (505) 998-1500
Fax: (505) 243-2542

Customer No. 005179

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